

Subject: Ceylonese larins; gold medal on a chain
the Ilgankon family [monograph on]

Pieris, Paul Edward
[Public Trustee Office
Colombo, Ceylon]

1934

May 29, 1934.

Dr. P. E. Pieris
Public Trustee Office
Colombo, Ceylon.

Dear Dr. Pieris:

Under separate cover I am mailing you a copy of my Campola Lirin Hoard monograph. Through an oversight no copy was sent you. We have received your communication that you have read a copy and should judge that you do not own one. Please accept this with my compliments. A number of years ago, I think following the St. Louis Exposition, I had the pleasure of meeting you. At that time I think you had gotten out a catalogue of Sinhalese coins, either your collection or a summary of a collection of one of the museums. We find we do not have this catalogue. Is it possible to still procure one of these? I beg to remain

Very sincerely yours,

HW:JG

Curator

Public Trustee Office,
Colombo, Ceylon,
30th June, 1934.

Howland Wood Esqr.,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway Between 155th
and 156th Streets,
New York.

Dear Mr. Wood,

I am very pleased to received from you a copy of your monograph on the Gampola Larin Hoard. I am glad that you remember meeting me after the St. Louis Exposition. I had met so many charming and interesting people during my stay in America but as you will understand I have got very much out of touch with them. I wonder if it was at dinner at Mr. Bliss's that we met.

You refer to a catalogue of Ceylon coins which was available at the Exposition. That was merely a catalogue of the private parties' collection and I fear is no longer available. You need not regret that fact as from my knowledge of today I know that there was nothing of special interest in that collection. Mr. Condington's book, from which you have quoted freely, is so far the most satisfactory catalogue available. I am not quite sure why you desire the private catalogue referred to. If it is with a view to purchasing any coins and if you will let me

know what kind of coins you are interested in, I can pass the information on to private collectors who have got duplicates available.

I am sending you under separate cover my last publication which deals with one of our local families. You will find there references to the currency in use in Ceylon over a period of 200 years. The inventories will probably be also of interest to you. Codrington's book has to be corrected in some instances in the light of the documents quoted by me in this book and the information has been passed on to Codrington and those corrections will be made by him in due course.

I wonder whether there is a printed catalogue of the collections of your Society so far as it refers to the Ceylon coinage. If so it will be very useful to me in any future correspondence with you.

It occurs to me that there is one field of the local coinage which should be dealt with by an expert and that is the coins issued locally in imitation of the Roman brass issue.. I have got a very large collection of these but have neither the knowledge nor the time necessary for tackling the problem.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. Meier

Public Trustee Office,
Colombo, 26th July 1934.
CEYLON.

Howland Wood Esqr.,
Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
New York.

Dear Mr. Wood,

In my capacity of Public Trustee there has reached my hands a gold medal and chain which may be of interest to your Society and of which I am forwarding to you a photograph under separate cover.

This article was presented by the British Government in 1804 to a distinguished Sinhalese and is intended to be worn round the neck. These medals are a survival of the custom which prevailed in the Maritime Provinces under the administration of the Dutch Company.

Each medal is a separate work and is not struck from a die. The number of them in the country is very small and it is very rarely that one of these articles, which are greatly treasured, comes on the market. In the present case the owner was unmarried and on his death has left a large number of heirs and the duty has fallen on me to realise his assets for distribution.

If in any way your Society is interested in this I am prepared to accept £.50 Sterling for it. The Colombo Museum has, through my means, already secured another of the same kind.

Yours sincerely,

K. M. M. M.



Frederic North
Governor
gave this Medal to
Mrs Philip Lamer born
Wijewickire me
Mistress of the Governor's Gate
for his faith full service
to Government
1804.

July 31, 1934.

Mr. P. E. Pieris
Public Trustee Office
Colombo, Ceylon.

Dear Mr. Pieris:

Your very kind letter received and also your book on the Ilangakon family. I have read most of this through with much interest and have made notes of where you have mentioned larins and certain other coins. I really was much intrigued in going through the various inventories of some of the richer members of the family, and wish to thank you for sending this on to me. I do not remember exactly where I met you. I think it was in New York but at the time I was living in Boston and came on to New York frequently.

I simply mentioned that catalogue of Ceylon coins because we did have one in our library at one time but it can no longer be found and our library likes to have a copy of every numismatic book. However, as it is out of print, please do not go to any trouble in trying to locate one.

Our collection of Singhalese coins is a rather good one for a collection outside of Ceylon. We really lack some of the very earlier pieces. Some of these deficiencies have and are being supplied by Mr. Biddell and as we have little money to purchase coins I think it might be just as well at the present time not to contact with other sources, as we might get involved with more than we could afford or might acquire duplicates. Unfortunately we do not have a printed catalogue of our coins. If some time I can find the time I may make up a list for you of what we do have. We have about fifteen of those Roman imitations, all of which are the very small pieces. I might be interested in your duplicates. Of course New York is too far away to really do much of any study or conslusive work on these. I am about to leave for my vacation but will try to draw up a list and make rubbings later of those coins in our collection.

Very truly yours,

August 29, 1934.

Mr. P. E. Pieris
Public Trustee Office
Colombo, Ceylon.

Dear Mr. Pieris:

Your letter and photograph just received. I appreciate your thought in offering us the gold medal but we have so many things to buy with limited funds that we are in no position to purchase this, especially as a piece of this sort is not what you might say within our scope. The only exception we make is similar objects in silver given to our American Indians. I beg to thank you most sincerely.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator